



# Western Wildfire Support Act

## Introduced by Congressman Joe Neguse (CO-02)

The bill is cosponsored by Representatives Schiff (D-CA), Panetta (D-CA), Horsford (D-NV), and Matsui (D-CA), and was introduced by Senator Catherine Cortez-Masto (D-NV) in the 117th Congress.

The *Western Wildfire Support Act* will provide at-risk communities across the western United States with additional resources to help prevent wildfires before they start, combat those that do spark, and help communities touched by wildfire recover and rebuild.

The comprehensive *Western Wildfire Support Act* will allow communities in Colorado and across the western U.S. to acquire the training, equipment, and funding they need to combat the increasing dangers posed by wild and rangeland fires.

**Specifically, the *Western Wildfire Support Act* is focused on three key tenets, outlined below:**

- **Preparation**

- Directs the Department of the Interior (DOI) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to create fire management plans for federal land in Nevada and across the U.S. These plans will include pre-fire planning, wildfire response management, and post-fire recovery.
- Provides funding to help communities, homeowners, and businesses prepare for wildfires by increasing their defensible space, launching community cleanup efforts, and more.
- Authorizes funds to acquire aircraft for wildfire operations.

- **Suppression**

- Directs the DOI and USDA to expedite the placement of wildfire detection equipment – including cameras and heat sensors – in at-risk wildfire areas.
  - This provision was recently awarded \$10 million in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee’s Infrastructure legislation.
- Establishes a grant program to help federal, state, and local agencies acquire state-of-the-art firefighting equipment – including air-tankers and slip-on tank units.
- Provides funding to research and develop the use of FAA-approved drones to fight wildfires.
- Includes a bipartisan provision to stop observers with unauthorized drones from interfering with fire-fighting efforts.

- **Recovery**

- Authorizes FEMA to create online resource guides to help communities and individuals impacted by wildfires access available assistance and resources.
- Provides \$100 million in funding to help communities impacted by wildfires conduct long-term rehabilitation projects.
- Establishes a competition to combat the spread of wildfire-related invasive species and help preserve the pre-fire natural landscape.

**This legislation facilitates several wildfire priorities recommended by Colorado wildfire officials and stakeholders, including:**

- Additional funding for emergency stabilization projects following wildfire.
- Resources for local authorities to acquire increased aerial and surge capacity support.
- Authorities to increase personnel capacity and utilizing local expertise.
- Investments in new wildfire detection equipment (cameras, sensors, UAVs, etc.).
- Investments in prediction and preparation capacities.
- Additional programs to develop treatments and strategies to combat invasive species.
- Resources for federal agencies to collaboratively work with local authorities to reduce threats to shared stewardship landscapes.
- Additional support to homeowners, building owners, and community managers to adapt homes and communities in preparation for wildfire.